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AD HOC GROUP ON THE BERLIN MANDATE
Sixth session
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REPORT OF THE AD HOC GROUP ON THE BERLIN MANDATE ON THE WORK OF ITS SIXTH SESSION, BONN, 3-7 MARCH 1997

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	OPENING OF THE SESSION (Agenda item 1)	1 - 6	3
II.	ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (Agenda item 2)	7 - 14	4
A.	Adoption of the agenda	7	4
B.	Organization of the work of the session	8 - 14	4
C.	Organization of the work of future sessions	15 - 19	5
D.	Attendance	20	6
E.	Documentation	21	6

		Paragraphs	Page
III.	PREPARATION OF A PROTOCOL OR ANOTHER LEGAL INSTRUMENT (Agenda item 3)	22 - 28	6
	(a) Elements related to strengthening the commitments in Article 4.2(a) and (b)	22 - 24	6
	(b) Elements related to continuing to advance the implementation of existing commitments in Article 4.1	25 - 26	7
	(c) Elements related to institutions and mechanisms and any other clauses	27 - 28	7
IV.	REPORT ON THE SESSION (Agenda item 4)	29 - 30	8

Annex

Documents before the Ad Hoc Group on the Berlin Mandate at its sixth session 9

I. OPENING OF THE SESSION
(Agenda item 1)

1. The sixth session of the Ad Hoc Group on the Berlin Mandate (hereinafter referred to as "the AGBM") was held at the Stadthalle Bad Godesberg, Koblenzer Strasse 80, Bonn, from 3 to 7 March 1997.

2. The Chairman of the AGBM, Ambassador Raúl Estrada-Oyuela, opened the session on 3 March 1997. He began by expressing his gratitude to the Government of Germany for its support to the secretariat and as host of the session. The Chairman noted that, whilst he welcomed the many new proposals submitted by Parties since the last session, he was concerned at the lack of agreement among developed countries on matters before the AGBM. Referring to a statement made the previous day by the former President of Germany, Dr. Richard von Weizsäcker, at an event hosted by the World Council of Churches in the context of its campaign to raise awareness of climate change, the Chairman underscored that the main problem facing the AGBM was the failure of developed countries to take the lead in addressing climate change. He observed that the costs of climate change mitigation should be compared with the price of inaction, and that the overall costs of such mitigation measures might not exceed the damage caused by a single storm. In concluding, the Chairman emphasized that, in setting emission reduction commitments, the AGBM should be guided by the needs of the environment.

3. The Executive Secretary welcomed all participants to the session, the first to be held in Bonn. He recalled that this sixth session of the AGBM was the last to take place before 1 June 1997, by which time the text of a proposed Protocol would need to be circulated to Parties in all six languages of the United Nations in order to fulfil the requirements of Article 17.2 of the Convention. The Executive Secretary noted that the main characteristics of the text would therefore need to be agreed at this session. He further observed that, whilst additional proposals could be accepted after 1 June, these should fall within the conceptual framework of the text prepared by that deadline. Finally, the Executive Secretary remarked that the absence of quantified targets represents an important missing element from the proposals of a number of Parties. He expressed the hope that it might prove possible for Parties to elaborate such numerical targets before 1 June.

4. The General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, Rev. Dr. Konrad Raiser, made a statement on the subject of the above mentioned campaign.

5. A statement was also made by a representative speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

6. At the 3rd meeting, on 5 March, statements were made on behalf of five non-governmental organizations.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
(Agenda item 2)

A. Adoption of the agenda
(Agenda item 2 (a))

7. The AGBM, at its 1st meeting, on 3 March, adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session.

2. Organizational matters:

   (a) Adoption of the agenda;

   (b) Organization of the work of the session;

   (c) Organization of the work of future sessions.

3. Preparation of a protocol or another legal instrument:

   (a) Elements related to strengthening the commitments in Article 4.2(a) and (b);

   (b) Elements related to continuing to advance the implementation of existing commitments in Article 4.1;

   (c) Elements related to institutions and mechanisms and any other clauses.

4. Report on the session.

B. Organization of the work of the session
(Agenda item 2 (b))

8. At the 1st meeting of the AGBM, on 3 March, the Chairman recalled that there would be services available for 10 meetings, with interpretation from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

9. The Chairman emphasized that the aim of this session was not to enter into substantive negotiations, but to streamline and consolidate the framework compilation of proposals from Parties (FCCC/AGBM/1997/2 and Add. 1) in order to prepare a clearer, more manageable negotiating text which would form the basis for the work of the Group at its next session.

10. To this end, the AGBM agreed to the Chairman's proposal to convene informal consultations among Parties under Agenda item 3 (b) on elements related to continuing to advance the implementation of existing commitments in Article 4.1, to be chaired by Mr. Evans King (Trinidad and Tobago).

11. The AGBM also agreed to convene informal consultations among Parties under Agenda item 3 (c) on elements related to institutions and mechanisms and any other clauses, to be chaired by Mr. Takao Shibata (Japan).

12. The AGBM accepted the Chairman's proposal to hold two informal round tables, one on new proposals from Parties and another on differentiation.

13. At the invitation of the Chairman of the AGBM, Mr. Suphavit Piamphongsant, the Vice-Chairman of the AGBM, chaired the informal round table on new proposals from Parties on 3 March. The aim of the round table was to facilitate more in-depth discussion on the many proposals received from Parties since the last session of the AGBM. These proposals are contained in document FCCC/AGBM/1997/MISC.1 and Add.1. The round table was well-attended, and the informal atmosphere helped to promote a constructive exchange of information.

14. The informal round table on differentiation, chaired at the invitation of the Chairman by Mr. Chow Kok Kee (Malaysia), was held on 4 March in the afternoon. The Chairman convened this round table as a follow-up to his informal consultations on this matter held prior to the session. Interested Parties were invited to present their analysis on points of convergence and divergence between the various proposals on differentiation, and the lively discussion which ensued was useful in fostering a greater understanding of this issue.

C. Organization of the work of future sessions
(Agenda item 2 (c))

15. The AGBM considered this item at its final meeting, on 7 March, where the Chairman noted with satisfaction that considerable progress had been made at this session towards the preparation of a negotiating text.

16. The AGBM requested the Chairman, with the assistance of the secretariat, to complete the negotiating text in time to enable the secretariat to produce it in the six languages of the United Nations by 1 June 1997. The Group agreed that the deadline for the submission of new proposals for incorporation in the negotiating text should be set at 1 April 1997 and that the names of the proposing Parties should no longer be included in the text.

17. In order to expedite the work of the Group, the Chairman requested Parties to submit all new proposals in legal language and to indicate their intended placement in the negotiating text. The Chairman informed the Group that the target for the secretariat was to ensure the

availability of the negotiating text in all six languages at the United Nations Office at Geneva by 1 June 1997. In addition, the text would be disseminated as widely as possible.

18. The Chairman advised that proposals submitted after the production of the negotiating text should be clearly derived from concepts already included within it and should not contain substantially new elements. He further noted, however, that it would not be necessary to include all the detail derived from such concepts, such as specific numerical values regarding QELROs, at this stage. Nevertheless, the Chairman expressed the hope that such values would be forthcoming in the near future, and well before the third Conference of the Parties (COP).

19. Looking ahead to the next session of the AGBM, the Chairman encouraged delegations to focus on further streamlining the different proposals on the table. In particular, the Chairman appealed to Annex I Parties to make every effort to increase the level of agreement among themselves on the key issues of QELROs and policies and measures.

D. Attendance

20. The lists of attendance at the sixth session of the AGBM are given in document FCCC/1997/INF.2.

E. Documentation

21. The documents prepared for the AGBM at its sixth session are listed in the annex below.

III. PREPARATION OF A PROTOCOL OR ANOTHER LEGAL INSTRUMENT
(Agenda item 3)

A. Elements related to strengthening the commitments in Article 4.2(a) and (b)
(Agenda item 3 (a))

1. Proceedings

22. The AGBM considered this matter at its 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th meetings, on 4, 5, 6 and 7 March respectively. Statements were made by representatives of 28 Parties, including one speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, one speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and one speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

23. At its 2nd meeting, on 4 March, the Chairman of the Annex I Experts Group on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Mr. Ian Pickard (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), made a statement to the AGBM on the work of that Group.

2. Conclusions

24. On the basis of a proposal by the Chairman, the AGBM, at its 4th and 5th meetings, on 6 and 7 March respectively, adopted text on elements related to strengthening the commitments in Article 4.2(a) and (b) for inclusion in the negotiating text. This can be found in document FCCC/AGBM/1997/3/Add.1.

B. Elements related to continuing to advance the implementation of existing commitments in Article 4.1

(Agenda item 3 (b))

1. Proceedings

25. As agreed under Agenda item 2 (a), informal consultations among Parties were held on this matter under the chairmanship of Mr. Evans King. Mr. King presented a report on the results of his informal consultations to the AGBM at its 4th meeting on 6 March.

2. Conclusions

26. On the basis of the report by Mr. King, the AGBM, at its 5th meeting, on 7 March, adopted text on elements related to continuing to advance the implementation of existing commitments in Article 4.1 to be included in the negotiating text. This can be found in document FCCC/AGBM/1997/3/Add.1.

C. Elements related to institutions and mechanisms and any other clauses

(Agenda item 3 (c))

1. Proceedings

27. As agreed under Agenda item 2 (a), informal consultations among Parties were convened on this matter under the chairmanship of Mr. Takao Shibata. Mr. Shibata presented a report on the results of his informal consultations to the AGBM at its 5th meeting on 7 March.

2. Conclusions

28. On the basis of the report of Mr. Shibata, the AGBM, at its 5th meeting, on 7 March, adopted text on elements related to institutions and mechanisms and any other clauses for inclusion in the negotiating text. This can be found in document FCCC/AGBM/1997/3/Add.1.

IV. REPORT ON THE SESSION
(Agenda item 4)

29. At the 5th meeting of the AGBM, on 7 March, the Chairman recalled that, as noted in the Provisional Agenda and Annotations (FCCC/AGBM/1997/1), a draft report on the session had not been prepared. The Group accepted a proposal from the Chairman and requested the Rapporteur, under the guidance of the Chairman and with the assistance of the secretariat, to produce the report after the session. The AGBM also agreed that the negotiating text, to be prepared by the Chairman would be issued as an Addendum to the report on the session.

30. In concluding, the Chairman thanked the Chairmen of the informal consultations and the round tables for their assistance and thanked all delegates for their constructive participation. He expressed the hope that the negotiating text to be produced before 1 June 1997 would enable negotiations to begin in earnest at the next session.

Annex

DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE AD HOC GROUP ON THE BERLIN MANDATE AT ITS SIXTH SESSION

Documents prepared for the session

FCCC/AGBM/1997/1	Provisional agenda and annotations
FCCC/AGBM/1997/2	Framework compilation of proposals from Parties: note by the Chairman
FCCC/AGBM/1997/2/Add.1	Framework compilation of proposals from Parties: note by the Chairman - Addendum
FCCC/AGBM/1997/MISC.1 and Add.1	Implementation of the Berlin Mandate: proposals from Parties
FCCC/AGBM/1997/MISC.2	Implementation of the Berlin Mandate: comments from Parties

Other documents for the session

FCCC/AGBM/1996/11	Report of the Ad Hoc Group on the Berlin Mandate on the work of its fifth session, held at Geneva from 9 to 12 December 1996
FCCC/AGBM/1996/MISC.2 and Add.1-4	Implementation of the Berlin Mandate: proposals from Parties
FCCC/CP/1996/15 and Add.1	Report of the Conference of the Parties on its second session, held at Geneva from 8 to 19 July 1996

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